

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of fax transmission across a network, the method comprising:
 - a) activating a fax system of a user;
 - b) activating a fax service, wherein the fax system establishes communication with the fax service across a network and transmits information about the user to the fax service;
 - c) participating in any fax transactions as desired by the user; and
 - d) deactivating the fax system, wherein the fax system and the fax service terminate communication.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein participation in any fax transactions further comprises establishing peer-to-peer connections between service subscribers and the fax system.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein participation in any fax transactions further comprises interaction with the fax service for any transmission and any reception of faxes through the fax service.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein activation of the fax system further comprises launching a software program on a computer of the user.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein activation of the fax system further comprises launching a software program in firmware in a fax device.
6. The method of claim 5 wherein in the fax device is one of the group comprised of: a computer, a fax system and a modem.
7. The method of claim 2 wherein the computer is one of the group comprised of: a personal computer with a modem, a telephone, a server, a network, and a wireless network device.
8. The method of claim 1 wherein activating a fax service includes connecting the fax system to the network.
9. The method of claim 1 wherein deactivating the fax system further comprises terminating communication with the fax system across the network.
10. The method of claim 1 wherein deactivating the fax system further comprises terminating a network connection between the fax system and the network.
11. A method of sending faxes across a network, the method comprising:
 - a) issuing a send command from a fax system to a fax service;
 - b) collecting information about a fax recipient;
 - c) determining if the recipient is registered with the fax service, wherein an alternative method to the fax service is used if the recipient is not registered;

- d) if the recipient is registered, determining if the recipient is active, wherein the fax is sent directly to the recipient if the recipient is active;
- e) if the recipient is not active, determining a preferred delivery method for the recipient; and
- 5 f) sending the fax by the preferred delivery method.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the alternative method further comprises:

- a) determining if a fax service local to the recipient exists; and
- b) delivering the fax through the public switched telephone network, wherein the fax is delivered by a local call if a fax service local to the recipient exists.

10 13. The method of claim 11, wherein the preferred delivery method is delivery by telephone and the fax is sent through the public switched telephone network.

14. The method of claim 11, wherein the preferred delivery method is delivery by e-mail and the fax is converted into an attachable format and sent by e-mail.

15 15. The method of claim 11, wherein the preferred delivery method is delivery by store forward and the fax is transferred to the fax service and held until the recipient becomes active and then delivered.

16. The method of claim 11, wherein the preferred delivery method is to have the recipient reconnect to the network to receive the fax and the method to reconnect comprises:

- a) establishing a second connection between the fax system and a fax number of the recipient through the public switched telephone network;
- b) transmitting a connect message through the second connection from the fax system to the fax number of the recipient;
- c) disconnecting from the second connection upon connection of the recipient fax system to the fax service through the network.

25 17. A computer-readable medium including software code that, when executed, results in:

- a) activation of a fax system on a computer;
- b) interaction between a user and the fax system;
- c) connection between the fax system and fax service across a network; and
- d) participation of the fax system in fax transactions utilizing the fax service.

30 18. The medium of claim 17, wherein utilization of the fax service further comprises using the fax service to locate users with whom transactions are desired.

19. The medium of claim 17, wherein utilization of the fax service further comprises reception and transmission of any faxes through the fax service.